
Introduced by Senator Dunn

February 22, 2005

An act relating to Mexican repatriation.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 670, as introduced, Dunn. Mexican repatriation program of the 1930s.

This bill would enact the "Apology Act for the 1930s Mexican Repatriation Program" and make findings and declarations regarding the unconstitutional removal and coerced emigration of United States citizens and legal residents of Mexican descent, between the years 1929 and 1944, to Mexico from the United States during the 1930s "Mexican Repatriation" Program.

The bill would express the apology of the State of California to those individuals who were illegally deported and coerced into emigrating to Mexico and would require that a plaque be placed and maintained in a public place to commemorate this event.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. This act may be cited as the "Apology Act for
- 2 the 1930s Mexican Repatriation Program."
- 3 SEC. 2. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
- 4 following:
- 5 (a) Beginning in 1929, government authorities and certain
- 6 private sector entities in California and throughout the United
- 7 States undertook an aggressive program to forcibly remove
- 8 persons of Mexican ancestry from the United States.

1 (b) In California alone, approximately 400,000 American
2 citizens and legal residents of Mexican ancestry were forcibly
3 removed to Mexico.

4 (c) In total, it is estimated that two million people of Mexican
5 ancestry were forcibly relocated to Mexico, approximately 1.2
6 million of whom had been born in the United States, including
7 the State of California.

8 (d) Throughout California, massive raids were conducted on
9 Mexican–American communities, resulting in the clandestine
10 removal of thousands of people, many of whom were never able
11 to return to the United States, their country of birth.

12 (e) These raids also had the effect of coercing thousands of
13 people to leave the country in the face of threats and acts of
14 violence.

15 (f) These raids indiscriminately targeted persons of Mexican
16 ancestry, with authorities and others characterizing these persons
17 as “illegal aliens” even when they were United States citizens or
18 permanent legal residents.

19 (g) Authorities in California and other states instituted
20 programs to wrongfully remove persons of Mexican ancestry and
21 secure transportation arrangements with railroads, automobiles,
22 ships, and airlines to effectuate the wholesale removal of persons
23 out of the United States to Mexico.

24 (h) As a result of these illegal activities, families were forced
25 to abandon, or were defrauded of, personal and real property,
26 which often was sold by local authorities as “payment” for the
27 transportation expenses incurred in their removal from the United
28 States to Mexico.

29 (i) As a further result of these illegal activities, United States
30 citizens and legal residents were separated from their families
31 and country and were deprived of their livelihood and United
32 States constitutional rights.

33 (j) As a further result of these illegal activities, United States
34 citizens were deprived of the right to participate in the political
35 process guaranteed to all citizens, thereby resulting in the tragic
36 denial of due process and equal protection of the laws.

37 SEC. 3. The State of California apologizes to those
38 individuals described in Section 2 for the fundamental violations
39 of their basic civil liberties and constitutional rights committed
40 during the period of illegal deportation and coerced emigration.

1 The State of California regrets the suffering and hardship those
2 individuals and their families endured as a direct result of the
3 government sponsored Repatriation Program of the 1930s.

4 SEC. 4. A plaque shall commemorate the individuals
5 described in Section 2 and shall be placed and maintained at a
6 public place.

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